

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-4, 6, 12-13 and 15-18 were pending.

Claim 17 is cancelled.

Claims 1 and 3 are amended.

Examiner has suggested several amendments via a telephone interview. Applicants have agreed to amend as below and file the needed terminal disclaimers.

Amended Claims 1 and 3

Claim 1 is amended to require that the second flocculant be distributed throughout the thickened suspension of part b using mixing equipment. Support for this amendment may be found on page 14, lines 16-23.

Claim 1 and 3 are amended to require mechanical compression dewatering. Support for the amendment may be found on page 14, lines 24-31.

No new matter is added.

Claim 17 is cancelled as it no longer limits claim 1.

Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 14 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-17 of copending Application No. 10/591,777.

Claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 9 and 11-14 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-15, 18 and 19 of copending Application No. 10/591,878.

Applicants attach two provisional terminal disclaimers obviating the above provisional rejections.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3-4, 6, 12-13 and 15-16 and 18 are respectfully solicited in light of the amendments *supra*.

Since there are no other grounds of objection or rejection, passage of this application to issue with claims 1, 3-4, 6, 12-13 and 15-16 and 18 is earnestly solicited.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. In the event that minor amendments will further prosecution, Applicants request that the examiner contact the undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,



Shiela A. Loggins
Agent for Applicants
Reg. No. 56,221

Ciba Corporation
Patent Department
540 White Plains Road
P.O. Box 2005
Tarrytown, NY 10591-9005
(914) 785-2768
SAL\22354SA.doc